The role of self-gentrification in sustainable tourism: Indigenous entrepreneurship at Honghe Hani Rice Terraces World Heritage Site, China

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**Abstract:** This article examines three forms of tourism gentrification occurring within the newly inscribed (2013) Honghe Hani Rice Terraces UNESCO World Heritage Site in Yunnan, China. The indigenous Hani and Yi communities who populate this remote mountainous area, possess distinct cultural practices that have supported the rice terrace ecosystem for centuries. This article draws on interviews and non-participant observation conducted with inhabitants and newcomers to analyse the types of gentrification occurring within the site. We argue that indigenous cultural practices, and consequently rice cultivation in the area, are threatened by gentrifier-led and state-led gentrification combined with high levels of outward migration of indigenous persons. This could pose a significant threat to the sustainability of tourism at this site and may ultimately compromise the site’s World Heritage Status. In the midst of these dangers, some indigenous people are shown to be improving their socio-economic standing – and becoming “middle class” or “gentry” – particularly through adopting entrepreneurial strategies gleaned from their encounters with outside-gentrifiers and tourists. This article proposes the concept of “self-gentrification” as a way to describe individuals who seek to improve themselves and their own community, while under threat of gentrification.
Detailed responses to Referee(s)' Comments:

Thank you very much for the recommendations for improving this manuscript. The authors would also like to extend our appreciation to all reviewers for theirs careful reading and thoughtful comments. We have now revised the manuscript in accordance with the reviewers’ suggestions.

Referee: 1
Comments to the Author

This was an interesting paper and the gentrification perspective provided a unique approach to indigenous tourism studies that I have not seen before.

- Thank you very much for the recommendation.

The literature review was generally comprehensive. The authors note that the issue of gentrification has previously been applied in other studies of China. However, has this approach been used to study tourism related issues in contexts besides China? A review of this is warranted.

- Thank you for the generous comments.

- Tourism gentrification studies are well observed under urban and market town settings worldwide. We have restructured and strengthened the section “Gentrification in tourism setting” with a more thorough review of literature, including Chinese language literature. It is now 450-word strong and includes discussion on cases of tourism related gentrification in cities and rural areas in China, Asia and other parts of the world.

More detail is required in the methods regarding the numbers of respondents. It is noted that some 200 hours of audio was collected but how many respondents were actually interviewed? And how many respondents in each of the different categories of respondents (i.e. local residents, community leaders, etc.)?

- Please see the attached supplementary file, which provides the detailed profile of the respondents and the key areas of enquiry.

- In the profile of the respondents, we do not provide the full names and positions. There is a strong requirement to protect our subjects of research, particularly in view of the political and administrative situation at the research site. It is important to note that the subjects are easily traceable in a small community.

- Our research team is continuously working with all stakeholders in the site and there is a need to maintain a good rapport. We hope that we would be able to have some long-term impact on sustainable (tourism) development at the site.
The major issue with the paper is the need for editing. There are consistent grammatical
errors and typos throughout the article which must be addressed (either by the authors
themselves or seeking the services of a professional editor).

- We have addressed this issue with two rounds of editing by native English speakers on
the final draft.

Referee: 2

Comments to the Author

This is an interesting research. However, several major weaknesses of this manuscript
are identified as follows:

1. The conceptualization of gentrification in particular self-gentrification is lacking. In fact,
more discussion on gentrification of tourism destination in Asia is needed. Furthermore,
the functions and types of gentrifiers requires more elaboration.

- Thank you very much for the generous and thoughtful comments.

- We have reviewed the sections on Gentrification and its agents, Gentrifier-led
gentrification, and State-led gentrification to provide a clearer conceptualisation of the
phenomena. We have also added a new section on the conceptualization of self-
gentrification providing a clear definition. We then add Table 1, summarising the types,
natures and impacts of gentrification.

- We have restructured and strengthened the section “Gentrification in tourism setting”
with a more thorough review of literature, including Chinese language literature. It is now
450-word strong and includes discussion on cases of tourism related gentrification in
cities and rural areas in China, Asia and other parts of the world. There are however
more studies of gentrification in urban settings than in rural/indigenous community
settings, irrespective of the context of tourism.

2. In terms of the construct of indigenous entrepreneurship, no argumentation of
Literature Review is stated in this area! As a result, the significance of indigenous
entrepreneurship is in doubts.

- We acknowledge that the construct of indigenous entrepreneurship is barely minimum.
This article is multi-disciplinary in nature but with a focus on rural tourism gentrification
and key innovation in self-gentrification. Indigenous entrepreneurship is a mean to
achieve self-gentrification leading to sustainable tourism development in the site.

- Nonetheless, we have taken the advice to strengthen the literature review in indigenous
businesses with 500 words on indigenous entrepreneurship and rural tourism
development in China. We examine the key barriers and key success factors for
indigenous entrepreneurship worldwide. Building on this literature and our fieldwork, we
added to the richness of this body of literature as well as providing practical
recommendations for improving indigenous involvement in tourism business at the site.
3. In Method part, the research limitation of adopting merely one single case is lacking! The reviewer does not see the open-question list on interviews. How many interviewees are involved in this research? Did the authors consider the cross validation of data elicited from this research? With reference to data saturation of using interviews, the authors failed to provide such information. As such, Method is relatively weak.

- We agree with the reviewer on the limitations of single case research. We, therefore, have mentioned this limitation at the end of Section 5: Methods.

- Taking the advice of the reviewers, we have improved the section on research methods. We have provided a supplementary file on the details of respondents and questions asked.

- We argue that triangulation or cross validation of data is achieved through the combination of multiple sources, multiple visits, and continuous receiving of information and discussion with key informants. We provide further explanation and support from literature in the Methods section.

- We do not expect saturation of data on gentrification as it is a live event continuing to unfold itself. The research is also not design based on Grounded theory where saturation is a key criteria. Neither is the research designed to be a large-scale survey of the general population. Nonetheless, we have met with the majority of the key stakeholders and conducted multiple fieldwork. We are also continuing to communicate via social media with key informants. These provide a degree of confidence on the richness and depth of data collected.

Referee: 3

Comments to the Author

This paper is interesting. It is clearly structured and easy to follow. However, there are several issues which need to be addressed in this paper.

1. Literature is not taken into consideration sufficiently.

The review can be theoretically enhanced by incorporating more scholarly work on tourism gentrification and indigenous entrepreneurship in China and worldwide.

- Thank you very much for the generous and thoughtful comments.
- We have restructured and strengthened the section “Gentrification in tourism setting” with a more thorough review of literature, including Chinese language literature. It is now 450-word strong and includes discussion on cases of tourism-related gentrification in cities and rural areas in China, Asia and other parts of the world.
- We have taken the advice to strengthen the literature review in indigenous businesses with 500 words on indigenous entrepreneurship and rural tourism development in China. We examine the key barriers and key success factors for indigenous entrepreneurship worldwide. Building on this literature and our fieldwork, we added to the richness of this body of literature as well as providing practical
recommendations for improving indigenous involvement in tourism business at the site.

2. Methods are not clearly described.

The paper said that “We interviewed local residents and community-leaders from a number of villages, government officials at village, town and county levels.” However, it did not explain how interviews were designed and conducted and how many residents, government officials and tourism managers were interviewed.

Triangulation of data also needs more explanation.

- Taking the advice of the reviewers, we have improved the section on research methods. We have provided an online supplementary file on the details of respondents and questions asked.
- In addition, we have provided more information on how the respondents were selected and where they were located within the WHS.
- We argue that triangulation or cross validation of data is achieved through the combination of multiple sources, multiple visits, and continuous receiving of information and discussion with key informants. We provide further explanation and support from literature in the Methods section.

3. Findings, conclusion and discussion need rework.

The paper lacks information of the interviewees. It needs to provide the profiles of key informants.

- We have provided an online supplementary file on the details of respondents and questions asked as requested.
- We have revised and rewritten most of the paragraphs to improve the writing style of these two sections in order to be more precise, and to enhance conciseness and readability. We have added two paragraphs to summarise the contributions to sustainable tourism research and practices.

The paper mentioned that “the average annual income of less than 3,000 RMB per person in the village”. What are the average annual incomes of guesthouse runners and other tourism operators?

- 3,000RMB is slightly less than US$500. We do not have the average annual incomes of guesthouse runners or other tourism operators as it is not our aim to assess their income level. But we suspect it is substantially higher. For instance, a small family-run guesthouse with 5 rooms sold at a rate of 100RMB/night and with full occupancy during two months of peak season would generate a revenue of 30,000RMB.

The respondents’ income RMB should be converted to US$ to help the reader to understand it more easily.

- We have done so after the comment.
In the section of self-gentrification of indigenous people, the paper mainly concerned on a young “middle class” entrepreneur – Mr. Tian. It would be better if the authors can provide more evidence from other local entrepreneurs.

- Thank you for the recommendation.

- There are of course other indigenous entrepreneurs in the WHS as mentioned in the second last paragraph in this sub-section. However, we believe that we could provide a more convincing and rich data on one case under the constraint of a very tight word limit.

- Nonetheless, self-gentrification encompasses not only local entrepreneurs but also other individuals – including returning indigenous migrants, who are able to take advantage of the growing tourism to improve their socio-economic status – which we have discussed in the prior sub-section of “Returning indigenous migrants as self-gentrifiers.”

The authors need to discuss how the paper advances understanding of sustainable tourism in theory or practice or both.

- We have provided a two-paragraph summary at the end of this article to encapsulate the contributions to the understanding and practicality of ensuring sustainable tourism at the end of the article.
The role of self-gentrification in sustainable tourism:

Indigenous entrepreneurship at Honghe Hani Rice Terraces World Heritage Site, China

Abstract:

This article examines three forms of tourism gentrification occurring within the newly inscribed (2013) Honghe Hani Rice Terraces UNESCO World Heritage Site in Yunnan, China. The indigenous Hani and Yi communities who populate this remote mountainous area, possess distinct cultural practices that have supported the rice terrace ecosystem for centuries. This article draws on interviews and non-participant observation conducted with inhabitants and newcomers to analyse the types of gentrification occurring within the site. We argue that indigenous cultural practices, and consequently rice cultivation in the area, are threatened by gentrifier-led and state-led gentrification combined with high levels of outward migration of indigenous persons. This could pose a significant threat to the sustainability of tourism at this site and may ultimately compromise the site’s World Heritage Status. In the midst of these dangers, some indigenous people are shown to be improving their socio-economic standing – and becoming “middle class” or “gentry” – particularly through adopting entrepreneurial strategies gleaned from their encounters with outside-gentrifiers and tourists. This article proposes the concept of “self-gentrification” as a way to describe individuals who seek to improve themselves and their own community, while under threat of gentrification.

Keywords: self-gentrification; indigenous; entrepreneurship; tourism gentrification; sustainability; World Heritage Site.
Introduction

On 22 June 2013 UNESCO inscribed Honghe Hani Rice Terraces (herein ‘Honghe WHS’) as a Cultural-landscape World Heritage Site. The designation refers to an area primarily populated by indigenous Hani and Yi ethnic minority persons who have carved the mountain slopes into large swathes of spectacular rice terraces. The remoteness of the area means local communities still observe cultural practices, which can differ from the main Chinese Han ethnic group. Rice-terrace cultivation is an integral part of their cultural practices, with ‘vernacular knowledge’ ensuring the sustainability of the system, maintaining the balance between agriculture and the natural environment. This harmonious co-existence is precisely the main reason cited for the UNESCO inscription (UNESCO, 2013). Local people therefore celebrated the global recognition of their culture that the inscription represented, and are equally excited about what this could hold for the future of both themselves and the rice terraces they live in.

Prior to the inscription, Honghe WHS had gained significant domestic and international reputation as a tourist destination, with visitor numbers steadily increasing over recent decades. Inscription has created an expectation that such growth will continue exponentially. However, amidst this change, communities have also been experiencing severe outward migration of young people to neighbouring cities for work (Chan, Zhang, McDonald, & Qi, 2016), albeit reflecting a general trend across rural China (see Cai, Park, & Zhao, 2008). This exodus of indigenous people raises concern over loss of local cultural knowledge and practices, especially those related to rice cultivation. The influx of tourists and tourism operators further escalate these concerns particularly in displacing indigenous families and converting traditional dwellings for tourism purposes, both of which are typical phenomena of gentrification. This article proposes a new concept of ‘self-gentrification’ which describes how long-term residents can respond to gentrification in a proactive manner that benefits them, while also ensuring a sustainable future for the WHS.

This article uses the notion of gentrification to understand social transformation in the WHS. This concept is especially useful for understanding situations where in-migration puts pressure on native groups, bringing about an increase in living costs and a change in use of land and limited housing stock. While the term “gentrification”
was not literally used by the participants of this study, it has been widely applied to describe similar processes in China (du Cros, Bauer, Lo, & Rui, 2005; Gu & Ryan, 2012; Su, 2012; Qian, He, & Liu, 2013), and the authors believe it helpful in understanding phenomena occurring in Honghe WHS.

This article also contributes to indigenous tourism studies by highlighting gentrification in the context of specific indigenous minority groups and asks whether a gentrified Honghe WHS can be sustainable. It contrasts a number of different forms of gentrification occurring in the area, discussing the impact on sustainability for each.

Despite many examples of successful gentrification in touristic market towns in both China (Su, 2012; Xu & Han, 2013) and elsewhere (Smith, 2002, p. 439), this article argues that tourism gentrification would not be sustainable in the Honghe WHS because of the inter-connectedness of the local population and the rice terraces. The absence of the indigenous people caused by gentrification would likely result in degradation of the rice terraces, which are the main tourist attraction.

**Gentrification and its agents**

The term gentrification was coined by Glass (1964) to describe a process of changes in housing stock that took place in Islington, London following demand from incoming middle class persons, resulting in a constriction of provision for working class people. Glass viewed the displacement of long-term residents – most of whom belonged to deprived or disadvantaged communities – as an injustice. Since then, gentrification in city neighbourhoods has been extensively studied by researchers and practitioners in a variety of fields, while retaining its distinctly moralistic flavour.

This article adopts a more inclusive definition of gentrification, applying the concept to study similar phenomena in non-urban settings such as rural (Phillips, 1993; Hines, 2010) and market towns (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 1990; Smith & DeFilippis, 1999; Su, 2012; Xu & Han, 2011). Hackworth (2002, p. 815) defines gentrification as “the production of space for progressively more affluent users” resulting in the gradual, indirect displacement of long-term residents. This definition is broader than the conventional meaning of “gentrification” used to describe the process of middle class colonization in disinvested urban neighbourhoods, resulting in changes in the social
fabric, along with increases in properties prices, and rental and living costs (see Glass, 1964).

There are numerous overviews of gentrification research and debates in the literature (see Atkinson, 2003; Clark, 2005; Hackworth & Smith, 2001; Slater, 2006). The literature has tended to focus on the definition, causes, processes, geographical identification, causal and resultant migration, political assignation of victims and perpetrators, and policy recommendations in response to gentrification. The following subsections critically review the literature on gentrification and its implications, analysing in particular gentrifier-led and state-led gentrification. We then offer the concept of self-gentrification as a key proposal of this article. Subsequently, we provide a contextual review on the application of gentrification on tourism and indigenous tourism, particularly in China.

**Gentrifier-led gentrification**

The dominant perspective on gentrification sees it as a process largely initiated and sustained by incoming populations. Neal (2010, p. 557) views gentrification as a gradual process where the gentrifiers are “pioneers who seek to tame the wilderness of rundown urban neighborhoods, and in the process potentially reap a profit from rising property values”. This group is sometimes said to be typified by their indifference to the existing population (Brown-Saracino, 2009, p. 3).

Other scholars have challenged the assumption that middle class gentrifiers are purely guided by an unwavering desire to civilise their new locality. Schlichtman & Patch (2014) identified six ‘pull factors’ that appeal to would-be gentrifiers: economic (affordability of houses), practical (centrality and connectivity of the location), aesthetic (character houses with historical caché), presence of amenities (proximity of museums, parks, waterfronts), social (e.g. cultural ‘melting pots’), and symbolic (e.g. community history and authenticity). Gentrifiers, they claim, are willing to accept the inconvenience of living in a deprived area for one or many of the pull factors.

Gentrifying populations sometimes display awareness of the potential impacts of their arrival, such as the physical, political, economical, and cultural displacement of the long-term residents (Brown-Saracino 2009, p. 4). Brown-Saracino (2009) has proposed that gentrifiers could be categorized based on their attitude towards the
social-cultural heritage of the community. Despite these qualms held by some gentrifiers over their own impact, studies suggest they do bring some benefits to long-term residents. For example, middle class gentrifiers tend to be more influential advocates when it comes to defending local communities, their presence improves the local economy of usually rather deprived areas, and they offer better social capital and networks that extend beyond the locality (Schoon, 2001).

This process, which is here defined as gentrifier-led gentrification is distinctive in that by being initiated by early gentrifiers (both individual and commercial) themselves, the gentrification process often appears scattered and unorganised. Examples of this have also been observed in China by Feng & Sha (2009) and Qian et al. (2013).

**State-led gentrification**

Another form of gentrification frequently identified in the literature is organised, large scale gentrification occurring under the direction of government, in partnership with investors and developers. This process has also been expanded, intentionalised, and policed by governments, resulting in what has been termed state-led gentrification. Government has played a leading role in the effort of re-engineering urban neighbourhoods since the late twentieth century (Smith, 2002).

As such this also reveals how the scales on which the concept of gentrification have been applied have shifted, from an almost accidental process arising out of similar, but independent choices made by typically unconnected individuals to an orchestrated process that forms part of bureaucratic systems of governing. Here, both these agencies and the incoming residents may be labelled as gentrifiers (Hackworth and Smith, 2001, p. 467).

This state-led gentrification forms part of political decision in which concepts of urban regeneration and revitalisation are employed to serve varying policy objectives such as increasing local tax revenues (Hackworth & Smith, 2001), creating neighbourhoods with more stable social orders (Uitermark, Duyvendak, & Kleinhaus, 2007), reducing crime, increasing social diversity, making places more ‘liveable’ (Florida, 2002) and fostering sustainable communities (Lees, 2008). In this context, gentrification has increasingly become a “global urban strategy” (Smith, 2002) of reinventing central urban cores deemed to have the potential to become places of
enhanced economic and cultural production and social cohesion (Uitermark et al., 2007).

State-led gentrification projects seem to produce mixed results. While Byrnes (2003) posits benefits for existing low-income long-term residents, not all scholars agree. Clark (2005) suggests this process of state-led gentrification has its price in that the influx of middle-class residents does not necessarily increase social cohesion, but rather results in an uneasy cohabitation with the long-term residents, contrary to the policy objectives of its proponents (Rose, 2004). Numerous scholars have suggested that state policies of social mixing in gentrifying neighbourhoods have only limited success (Atkinsons & Blandy, 2006; Lees, 2008; Veldboer, Kleinhans & Duyvendak 2002).

Gentrification in cities occurs beyond Euro-American context, and now constitutes a global phenomenon (Clark, 2005). In Asia, cases of large-scale and state-led gentrification are also well documented (e.g. He, 2007 and Zhao, Kou, Lu & Li, 2009 in China; and Lee and Joo, 2008 and Shin, 2009 in South Korea). Gentrification in Chinese cities is the result of urban development strategy to upgrade building stock and revitalise the economy, and occurs on a particularly intensive and large scale (He, 2010). The expulsion of original residents is also well organised and large-scale (He, 2010; Su, 2012; Zhao et al., 2009), with some being relocated to particularly distant areas.

**Conceptualisation of Self-gentrification**

In summary, gentrification has traditionally been conceptualized and understood in a number of different ways. In its most essential form, gentrification has stood out as an unusual reversing of upwardly-mobile physical and social migratory trends, with those of high social and economic capital intentionally inhabiting environments that were generally considered not becoming of them, and in so doing gradually transforming the status of those locales (often to the exclusion of the original habitants). The majority of gentrification research foregrounds the detrimental effects of gentrification (Atkinson, 2002, p. 20).

Moving forward from whether gentrification helps or harms existing communities, this article addresses an under-explored area in the literature – how long-term
residents appropriate the process of gentrification for their own ends. There is only limited literature discussing these responses - for example, long-term (early) gentrifiers using nostalgic narrative to counter further gentrification in Lower East Side, New York (Ocejo, 2011). However, the above case illustrates defensive strategies by the long-term residents to counter the advance of gentrification, rather than any proactive approach to improve their own socio-economic standing.

We propose the concept of self-gentrification as:

*Under the threat of other forms of gentrification, the long-term residents adopt a proactive approach to become the 'gentry' themselves. As such they are able to benefit from the positive aspects of gentrification whilst avoiding much of the negative effects, particularly displacement.*

The notion of self-gentrification adds a further dimension to the concept, allowing for the gentrifier to be a native of the community undergoing transformation. It possesses both individualistic features (i.e. a desire to improve one’s lot), but also concern for a wider community to whom one belongs. As such, this version of gentrification is perhaps acutely prone to ambivalence, and contradictory feelings, especially in Asian contexts where values of extended family, community and place of origin are so strongly emphasized. Table 1 summarises the features of these three types of gentrification.

Table 1

Gentrification in tourism settings

Increasingly, research in gentrification has been applied to describe similar processes under different contexts and locales (Phillips, 2014). Gentrification has also been applied in suburbs and market towns (Smith, 2002, p. 439; Smith & DeFilippis, 1999), rural areas (Phillips, 1993; Phillips & Smith, 2001; Hines, 2010; Stockdale, 2010), and sites of tourism (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 1990; Gotham, 2005).

In tourism studies, the concept of gentrification became popular between the mid-1990s and early 2000s (Ashworth & Tunbridge, 1990, p. 95). The majority of studies
took place in the context of historical urban areas or small towns (see Judd, 2003; Page & Hall, 2003). In China, large-scale tourism gentrification, which happened in cities or market towns, was mostly led by government and big corporations and resulted in the extensive relocation of long-term residents away from the main tourism site to the peripheries (e.g. Su, 2012; Zhao et al., 2009).

In the process of tourism gentrification, space is transformed into affluent enclaves to accommodate better-off tourists. Extreme cases of tourism gentrification have been described as cases of “fantasy city” (Hannigan, 1995), “museification” and “mummification” (Bouché, 1998), where gentrifying projects turn urban space into “tourist bubbles”.

The gentrifiers are both outside owners and employees of establishments catering to tourists, as well as the tourists themselves. Clark (2005) notes that although individual tourists may be transient, the continuous stream of tourists may lead locals to view them as an ever-present outsider. Similarly, the original inhabitants may find themselves leaving the area because of difficulties in coping with the overwhelming presence and sometimes the unfamiliar social behaviour of the tourists. Locals may also respond to increasing property prices and living costs in touristic areas, and relocate to less expensive and calmer zones.

The process of tourism gentrification in suburbs or urban peripheries has also generated positive outcomes. For instance, tourism gentrification can contribute to protection and revitalisation of the built cultural heritage and urban landscape. The regeneration of Wendeka in Quebec City sponsored by the Canadian government in partnership with local indigenous authorities helped to revitalise the indigenous Huron culture and language (Iankova, 2008).

Beyond touristic cities and towns, tourism gentrification in remote rural tourism areas remain relatively unexplored, with very few exceptions (e.g. Hines, 2010; Stockdale, 2010). This imbalance likely emerges from the fact that conflicts emerging as a result of gentrification are usually linked to competition for land for development. Land is usually more plentiful in rural settings, however the unusual topography of Honghe WHS restricts available land and provides a unique context for a study of tourism gentrification in a rural setting.
Indigenous entrepreneurship and rural tourism development in China

Rural tourism is often typified by being “built upon the rural world’s special features of small-scale enterprise, open space, contact with nature and the natural world, heritage, 'traditional' societies and 'traditional' practices” (Lane, 1994, p. 14). Its development is often contingent on the conservation of nature and cultural heritage (Lane & Kastenholz, 2015). Particularly in China, the government often attempts to guide rural tourism development as a means of rural socio-economic regeneration (Su, 2011).

Chinese indigenous tourism is distinctive in occurring under an authoritarian state that practises market-socialist economic governance. Despite considerable reform from the 1980s onwards the state still regulates many forms of economic activity and land use, for instance, using hukou system (Chan, 2010). The establishment of numerous autonomous ethnic regions and districts in areas throughout China has not necessarily resulted in minority groups taking more control over their own resources and destinies (Swain, 1989; Xie, 2001). In this regard, Harvey (2005) describes the Chinese economic reality as an increasing incorporation of neoliberal elements integrated with authoritarian centralised control, in contrast to cases in most of the developed countries where the indigenous communities may enjoy greater control of their economic activities including tourism (Hinch & Butler, 1996).

Despite booming indigenous tourism in China (Oakes, 1998; Walsh & Swain, 2004), the majority of entrepreneurs in the indigenous tourism sector tend to be Han Chinese migrating from other parts of the country, which increase the economic leakages out of the indigenous region and leads to unsustainability. For example, a study by Yang & Wall (2008) in another indigenous tourism destination in the Yunnan province suggests that Han entrepreneurs dominate tourism business whereas local indigenous people have limited involvement. The participation of the indigenous people at managerial level is frequently non-existent or marginal.

The lack of rural tourism enterprises may be because when they do exist, such enterprises are typically fragmented and poorly organised (Lane & Kastenholz, 2015). Equally, indigenous tourism enterprises in many parts of the world are mostly micro-businesses and have their viability threatened (Fuller, Buultjens, & Cummings, 2005) by similar problems such as land tenure issues, low literacy, lack of access to capital,
weak social capital, insufficient business skills, no training opportunity, and no knowledge of market trends (Cachon, 2000; Jeremy et al, 2010; Weir, 2007). Other obstacles identified are favouritism and clientelism faced by entrepreneurs in local communities, lack of perseverance when problems first occur, and not knowing how to seek good support (Iankova, 2016).

In ensuring sustainability of rural tourism, Bramwell (1994) proposes that attention should be “given to the role of local communities and local businesses…” instead of excessive external intervention. Cornell (2006), in analysing indigenous business in the USA, suggests that success may depend on adequate start-up funds, smart management, adequate infrastructure, and a strong business network of indigenous and non-indigenous partners. Fuller et al. (2005) have also noted the advantages of partnership with larger corporations in the survival of Australian indigenous enterprises.

**Issues of cultural change**

Literature in indigenous tourism in China presents tensions between cultural exoticism (tourists’ desire for “authenticity” by “freezing” the culture in past representations), cultural commodification (selective modification of culture in accordance with tourists’ taste), and cultural preservation versus modernity (indigenous people’s desire to achieve modernity) (Swain, 1989; Xie, 2001; Yang & Wall, 2008). Non-indigenous tourism operators often (with varying degrees of intent) misrepresent indigenous persons. For example, Yang & Wall (2008) argue “authentic” representations of ethnic people are often being interpreted and controlled by these Han tourism entrepreneurs, for instance, through the construction of “alien” architectural forms, which may even be subsequently adopted by local people themselves.

In China, local theories of cultural change have taken their own specific flavour, at times drawing on the wider global debates on cultural change (Baos, 1911; Steward, 1955). It should be noted that evolutionary perspectives – that viewed non-Western cultures as essentially static (Tylor, 1881; Morgan, 1877) – still hold important sway, in part because of the influence of Marx-Engels unilineal schema of the evolution of society, which was appropriated by the Communist party and applied to existing Chinese understanding about race (Dikötter, 1992). The ideology advanced through
these accounts is that societies go through various stages of cultural evolution, from primitive, to petty capitalist, then capitalist, before emerging into socialism and eventually finishing in communism.

The work of Gillette (2000) is particularly relevant given the ethnic minority focus of this article. Gillette, studying the material lives of Hui Muslim minority populations in northwest China, noted how Hui and Han both appropriate these evolutionary ideals to different ends. The Han often stigmatise Hui populations as being ‘backwards’. In response, the Hui increase their own consumption of modern consumer goods in order to be able to assert themselves as being more advanced than Han populations. Although Hani and Yi minorities differ in important ways from the Hui in Gillette’s example, it remains a possibility that indigenous populations may appropriate gentrification in a similar way.

**Honghe WHS context**

The Honghe WHS is defined by a complex co-existence of multiple ethnic minority villages with different religions, socio-cultural systems and languages, in addition to other incoming populations. The main ethnic group, the Hani, build their villages and terraces at the highest altitude, from 1,400m to 1,800m above mean sea level, while the Yi ethnic group occupies middle altitude mountains, mostly below 1,600m (see Chan et al., 2016). In total, there are 82 villages with a total population of around 50,000 in 166 square kilometres of core area and 295 square kilometres of buffer zone in the Yuanyang county, Honghe prefecture (UNESCO, 2013).

The rice-terrace ecosystem has existed for circa 1,300\(^1\) years, and it has also become reflected in, and sustained in local cultural concepts. In the core area of the Honghe WHS, the upper slopes of the mountain with altitudes of higher than 1,800 metres are primarily forested while the terraced rice fields are distributed in the valley down to 700 metres above sea level with, at times, gradients of 15 to 20 degrees. The Hani build their villages in between their sacred forests at mountaintops and earthy rice terraces further down the slopes. The villages are populated with traditional Hani mushroom like dwellings – commonly two-and-a-half storeys with a thatched roof.

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\(^1\)Manshu, Tang Dynasty (618-970AD), documented minority ethnic groups practising an ingenious form of mountain farming in southern Yunnan, but without further details. The more reliable records describing rice terraces and irrigation channels appeared in Ming dynasty (1368-1644AD) (Shimpei, 2007).
The Hani religious practice of forest worship encourages forest conservation, which helps to deliver sustainable water supply for the villages and rice terraces (Lu, 2011:121; Mao 1991; Wang, 1999). During the formation of a new Hani settlement, villagers establish a forested sanctuary to house the spirits with whom they have entered into a kind of contractual relationship (Bouchery, 1996). The forest plays an important role in the local water cycle by acting as a natural moisture trap and water reservoir, supplying ever-running streams via a complex web of natural and man-made drainage channels and sluice gates distributing water throughout the terraces via a democratic social system with an elected irrigation headman (yiroharapo) to manage and apportion water resources (Shimpei, 2007).

The local people maintain the terraces themselves in the course of rice cultivation. This is primarily subsistence farming, and families supplement this with raising livestock and fishing in the terraces. However, communities are losing young people who move to urban areas for jobs and education, a trend familiar in almost all of rural China (Chan et al., 2016).

The indigenous communities and rice terraces thus face a unique set of challenges that place them in an especially precarious position as tourism and gentrification bite in. These challenges differ substantially from most other heritage sites such as ancient cities and places of architectural interest - with a notable exception of the Philippines Cordilleras rice terraces (Villalon, 2012), where the key elements of the UNESCO inscription are at danger of disappearing as a result of gentrification.

**Methods**

This study has focused its fieldwork solely on the Honghe WHS so as to provide a fuller account of the gentrification occurring there in the context of growing tourism. In this study we paid attention to the dynamics of gentrification agents - the gentrifiers, and the indigenous people.

This article draws upon primary and secondary evidence collected from a larger research project relating to innovation and tourism at Honghe WHS. The sources of primary data come from semi-structured interviews, unstructured in-depth interviews and observation, as appropriate depending on the types of respondent. Secondary data
mainly came from statistics collected by the government and companies (including the state-owned tourism company that assumes the main responsibility for managing and developing tourism in the WHS), in addition to policy documents and narrative accounts.

Combining these different sources allowed the researchers to examine competing (and sometimes contradictory) forms of evidence, which allowed for more convincing findings (Yin 2009). This was also the approach taken to triangulate some data, which was particularly useful in the case of sensitive evidence, and helped to make for more reliable conclusions (Yin, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The main fieldwork was conducted in Honghe between June and July 2013. Close contact with key informants in the WHS has been subsequently maintained through social media, where we obtained updates and followed key events. A team member conducted a 10-day revisit in May 2015 to collect further data. In August 2015, another research team of seven members conducted a further two-week revisit, helping to verify and update some data.

The team met with owners and employees of tourism related businesses in the scenic area, ranging from small guesthouses to the large state-owned corporation and its subsidiaries. The targeted guesthouses were mostly located in the most visited villages, which are susceptible to a greater degree of gentrification. We interviewed local residents and community leaders from different villages, and also government officials at village, town and county level, who have a portfolio related to tourism, environment and development at the WHS site. An online supplementary to this article is available to provide details of key respondents and interview questions. We obtained approximately 200 hours of interview audio recordings. The interviews were mostly conducted in Mandarin Chinese (putonghua), but on some occasions our local guide helped as an interpreter (to and from Hani and Yi languages to Chinese Mandarin), particularly amongst older villagers who often had difficulty speaking standard Chinese.

Interview recordings were transcribed and stored in qualitative data analysis software Nvivo, along with the photos, videos and observations notes. This was examined thematically according to the theoretical framework regarding the processes of
gentrification (gentrifier-led and state-led) as depicted in the literature review, as well as an emerging category of self-gentrification. We searched for evidence of these processes, forces, and implications for the indigenous people and their responses to such changes.

The results of this research will have practical significance for sustainable development in the WHS. It could be a key case (Thomas, 2011, p. 514) to exemplify the analytical objects of the inquiry i.e. the phenomena of gentrification of rural/indigenous tourism sites, and more significantly its location in a World Heritage Site. Nonetheless, as a single case research, caution should be applied in claiming any representativeness for other cases (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Yin, 2009).

Findings

Unsustainable gentrifier-led gentrification

A low degree of gentrification in the villages of Honghe Hani rice terraces had already occurred prior to its inscription as a WHS. Since 2004 a number of non-local entrepreneurs (both Han and other minorities) from other parts of China had rented indigenous dwellings and converted them into guesthouses or restaurants. By 2013, the records of the Rice Terraces Management Bureau indicated such persons were still few in number. In-depth interviews with four such owners revealed the beauty of the rice terraces as key reason for their in-migration. This group highlighted concerns regarding integration with indigenous people.

Early gentrifiers can be distinguished by their place of origin: either big cities or neighbouring towns. Those from neighbouring towns are typically entrepreneurs belonging to other minority groups, who are keen to make the most of increasing visitor numbers. Their familiarity with the local socio-economic system, culture and languages, means they generally fare better than others from further afield. Building on these advantages, one of the owners declared that they run a few guesthouses in various tourist attractions in the surrounding regions.

The second group often come from distant big cities. These lifestyle entrepreneurs desert city lives to become guesthouse operators in the WHS. This ‘amenity-seeking’ entrepreneurship is also observed in other parts of the world (Snepenger, Johnson, &
Rasker, 1995). The three owners interviewed all presented similar reasons for relocating: affinity to the terrace landscape, a spirit of conservation and desire to help local communities. One of the earliest guesthouse owners, who has operated the guesthouse for seven years, said:

“Our journey began when my child came here and brought back many astonishing photos … beautiful area … air is fresh.”

This group of lifestyle-seeking gentrifiers is not primarily profit orientated but could also play an important role in the neighbourhood (Schoon, 2001). Madden (1999) observes that the British and Irish-owned businesses in the Costa del Sol were motivated by lifestyle or social reasons rather than profit. Other studies have pointed out that conserving local culture can be a key motivation for indigenous and other newcomers (Chang, Tsai, & Chen, 2010). For example, one lifestyle entrepreneur in the WHS commented:

“… we know that they don’t have enough teachers. We hope we can help them. A lot of children stop going to school after fifth grade. I hope to change the locals’ view on education and hope that the children [here] can attend higher education. We will encourage our guests to become voluntary teachers and will provide them food and accommodation. We hope to be a bridge to help them. My wife has taught at the school for two years. These are the purposes of us being here.”

These two groups of newcomers also brought new (and often transferable) resources, ideas and investment to the community. We noticed some local entrepreneurs seizing opportunities, imitating business models and ideas, and learning to start their own business and run hospitality establishments. One lifestyle entrepreneur explained that he does not see such local competition as a problem, and is happy to share his knowledge with locals to help them succeed in the tourism industry.

Despite these positive contributions, the arrival of individual gentrifiers nonetheless increases the pressure on the property market. A government ban on new construction in the WHS for conservation purposes has caused high rental demand for existing

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2 All quotations are translated from Chinese unless specified.
Hani dwellings. The same regulation also strictly controls modification to existing buildings in order to protect the architectural authenticity of Hani dwellings. Nonetheless, it does not attempt to regulate the rental market on the traditional Hani dwellings.

The conversion of dwellings will lead to the displacement of existing occupants. Some villagers rent out their dwellings under 10-20 years of long-term contract to gentrifying-entrepreneurs. While conducting research within the WHS, only a few days after the UNESCO inscription, interviewees informed us of an increasing number of enquiries for renting indigenous dwellings. After two years, such renting arrangements have become increasingly widespread. For example, by early 2015 Pugaolao village had 32 guesthouses/restaurants, constituting more than 20 per cent of the total 147 households in the village. Eighteen of these are operated by non-local gentrifiers who sign long-term rental agreements with indigenous Hani landlords. During our 2015 revisit, a gentrifier declared the annual rental he paid to be about USD10,000 – a very high figure in comparison to the village’s average annual income of less than USD 500 per capita.

The guaranteed stable income gained from renting one’s home proves extremely attractive for many local families. However, although rental incomes act as a source of wealth, rental agreements also run the risk of displacing villagers from their own villages who must find new accommodation, often in neighbouring towns away from the rice terraces. A few tightly locked guesthouses were observed during fieldwork visits, presumably only open for business during peak tourist season.

Gentrifier-driven gentrification almost always occurs free of central planning oversight, and efforts to track it are currently minimal, making it difficult to mitigate any of its negative consequences. For instance, Su (2012), who studied the nearby gentrified market town of Lijiang, commented that it is often unclear where the long-term residents have moved to. If such renting practices became ubiquitous, villages here might become ‘ghost villages’, seasonally populated by tourism operators and tourists, a phenomenon common in many touristic areas around the world.

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3 Data for the number of households is provided by local government.
4 Income figures were collected by local government prior to the application of World Heritage listing in 2012.
The sustainability of the rice terraces would also be in question. The rice terraces require constant maintenance, and few beyond the indigenous population possess the skills and knowledge to maintain it. Their absence increases the likelihood of this landscape falling into disrepair. This possibility also raises the question of whether Hani culture could survive in its current form without the rice terraces. Conversely would the rice terraces – and its magnificent view and tourism industry built on it – survive without the indigenous people?

**Roles of the state and corporation in gentrification**

This study did not observe any systematic state-organised gentrification in the villages within the WHS, or policies to that effect. Nonetheless, there was some discussion around transforming some villages in the Honghe WHS. One well-connected participant explained:

“There are powerful people planning to relocate one of the Hani villages. They were talking about moving the villagers to an area higher up the hill. Luckily they haven’t found a suitable site; otherwise they would have implemented it.”

Suspicions of large-scale state-led gentrification are not without ground, especially given preceding examples of gentrification led by government and big corporations in other cities or market towns in China (e.g. Su, 2012; Zhao et al., 2009). Moreover, the main drivers of the intention to gentrify the entire village are expressed in terms of providing a conducive environment and good standard of accommodation for tourists. Proposed challenges in promoting tourism in the villages include acute shortage of facilities, humans and livestock living at close-quarters, and poor sanitation and waste water management, all of which the government believe act as creating barriers to tourism growth.

The tension between cultural exoticism and modernity is clearly depicted by the most senior manager in the state-owned tourist development corporation Shibo-Yuanyang Co. Ltd. in improving the general living conditions of the villages:

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5 See Chan et al. (2016) for information on the roles and corporate structure of the company.
“Some experts proposed that the more authentic [the culture is] the better; the more ancient the better... you demand [indigenous people] to be poor, backward, and remain primitive, but you want to stay in a luxurious hotel room!

...

Our company position is... we are investing in this place, first and foremost, for conservation. But if it is merely conservation, and no reasonable development, the people cannot get rich. If local people are not rich, they will destroy [the rice terraces].”

Nonetheless, the necessity of preserving local culture in order to conserve the rice terrace ecosystem is widely acknowledged by many stakeholders including government officers, tourism development corporations and local residents. We did not learn about any intended large-scale gentrification plan by Shibo-Yuanyang. The manager explained that:

“As for the indigenous [people], if something were to go wrong with them, there wouldn’t be anyone cultivating the rice terraces, and it would therefore be deserted. The scenery would no longer be there. The value of the rice terraces would diminish, so too would the continuation of their culture.”

While appreciating the vibrancy of tourism in nearby Lijiang, tourism executives and villagers also expressed concerns about the displacement of indigenous communities that had occurred under state-led gentrification:

“We do not wish the Hani Rice Terrace to developed like Lijiang. They lost the uniqueness of the indigenous community. It is too commercialised.”

“We do not know the future of Hani Rice Terraces, but we do not wish it to be as Lijiang. There are not many indigenous people living in the old town.”

The company also sees the importance of providing employment and training to the local communities. They noted a few cases of local people gaining more experience and increasing responsibility. For instance, two of the newly promoted local
executives were sent to the provincial capital to market the destinations. When asked about local recruitment, a manager said that:

“…Other than a few of us (senior managers) who come from the provincial capital, about 95 per cent of middle managers are locals. We also continuously provide training to the locals, take them to other tourist destinations to observe and learn, as well as share our experience with them…”

This section has shown that though the state and state-owned enterprises have taken an interest in gentrifying parts of the WHS, this has rarely been enacted in any systematic, overall way. It is unsustainable to enforce any large-scale gentrification by relocating villagers away from their traditional villages adjacent to the rice terraces, to a newly built village or town.

Self-gentrification of indigenous people

Newcomers, the state and enterprise may seek to drive the gentrification process in certain ways, begging the question of what indigenous people actually want themselves. Our research seemed to point to two general types of indigenous persons – returning migrants and local entrepreneurs – who made particular efforts to improve their socio-economic status in the face of the expanding tourism gentrification in the WHS. In this section, we present the evidence for arguing that such groups may be regarded as self-gentrifiers. Importantly, our notion of self-gentrification does not necessarily entail complete desertion of one’s own culture and farming traditions. Despite transformations of indigenous culture, even young people continue to identify with rice cultivation as an integral part of their culture. A young Hani person commented:

“…although many young people are going away to work in the city, we will still return to farm the rice terraces when our fathers are too old to work. The rice terraces cannot be deserted, they are the bedrock of our society, inherited from our ancestors.”
Returning indigenous migrants as self-gentrifiers

In China, rural-to-urban migration is often actually circular migration, with migrants eventually returning to their place of origin (Connelly, Roberts, & Zheng, 2010, p. 4; Zhang, 1999). Studies in China and worldwide show diverse economic and social reasons (Piotrowski & Tong, 2010) for migrants returning home, including retirement, success or failure in their venture away from home (Cerase, 1974), and family concerns (Wang & Fan, 2006; Dustman, 2003). Migrants often return equipped with awareness of urban approaches to business and investment, additional language skills, and financial and social capital. Such returnees generally prefer employment in the service sector and starting small-scale businesses (Ahlburg & Brown, 1998; Williams & Hall, 2010). In Honghe rice terraces, for instance, returning migrants played an important role in the diffusion of solar hot water systems and motorbikes in the villages. They returned with a stronger financial capacity, and an improved Mandarin Chinese skill, which is of great use when dealing with domestic visitors.

Despite extended absence, these migrants tend to maintain a very strong feeling of connection for the rice terraces. They often already have experience of, and inclination to maintain, terrace-farming practices. Local villagers in the WHS explained that young people often return to help their families with agricultural labour during busy periods, which often coincided with major cultural-religious festivals, further enabling the transmission of cultural knowledge and continuation of practices. As one villager commented:

“Now you hardly see any young people in the village…although they are going to work in the city, they will be back, during the year, to do farm work. During planting and harvesting seasons for instance, they will be back. Then, they go to the city again.”

Other studies have also pointed to the commonality of return migrants’ establishing or becoming involved in tourism enterprises elsewhere due to the low entry barrier to this sector (Mendosa, 1982; Kenna, 1993; Thomas-Hope, 1999). A government officer informed that,
“They are learning about the inscription…. Young people are returning [after working away]. There is more passion in starting one’s own businesses, such as selling local products, ethnic clothing and souvenirs, and [running] guesthouses and restaurants. Many people are coming to ask about how to start a guesthouse and restaurant.”

**Self-gentrification of non-migrating indigenous people**

In addition to indigenous returnees, we finally give the example of a local young Hani male who has never left the WHS for an extended period of time but has instead transformed himself in order to take advantage of tourism development. In a decade he has moved from being a teenager in a struggling subsistence-farming family to identify himself as a successful “middle class” entrepreneur, now operating two guesthouses and a tourist transport service.

This individual explained how his journey to tourism entrepreneurship occurred through many years of ongoing interaction with tourists, through whom he learnt how to do business. He recalled how during his childhood he would chase tourists begging for money. Some tourists encouraged him to instead sell boiled eggs and rice in exchange. He later began to provide travel and photographic touring services and learned about photography himself, before ultimately investing in guesthouse operation and transport services. He reiterated this transformation:

“At the time I started to guide tourists, the tourists would say … ‘How about we have lunch at your house?’ I would be very happy… after eating they would … stay for the night at the house, the business slowly started in this way”

In this example a key diffusing agent of touristic knowledge are the tourists themselves, who bring their own ideas and expectations into the WHS. Often locals develop innovative approaches to tourism services in the WHS as a result of these interactions with tourists, including once starting a cultural-performance training centre. Through ongoing interactions with tourists this individual gradually came to understand what would most interest them - for example, particular types of scenery and photogenic locations. Over the course of time, this helped him gain knowledge of
photography. He soon became one of the most popular tourist guides within the WHS, with many returning customers and friends.

Many local indigenous people view involvement in tourism as having potential to improve their livelihood and reap the benefits of tourism development. There are other cases of indigenous entrepreneurs who run restaurants, guesthouses, and provide transport services, or act as tour guides showing tourists around the WHS. These act as important ways of allowing native people to remain in the WHS. The above individual sees his future in the rice terraces:

“In reality there is no need to leave here, I want to remain in this beautiful place. It doesn’t matter if I earn a lot of money or not; if I were to leave, I would miss home so much. My ideal is to ride on the development of tourism here.”

Nonetheless, the phenomenon of self-gentrification does have some negative effects. Similar to any outsider-gentrifier, the indigenous gentrifier could lead to displacement of other indigenous households. For example, in 2012, this entrepreneur signed a fifteen-year lease on another property in the village to use as a guesthouse, enticing another indigenous family to move out of their own dwelling, and further contributing to the pressure on indigenous dwellings.

**Discussion and conclusions**

Despite achieving economic transformation and tourism development objectives in many cities and market towns in China, the intertwining connections between the indigenous communities and the main tourist attraction of the rice terraces makes state-led gentrification unsustainable in Honghe WHS. This article provided strong evidence that many stakeholders are aware of the importance of these connections for the purposes of sustainability.

While there is no imminent threat of large-scale and state-led gentrification, outsider-gentrifier-led gentrification has been continuing in an unmitigated manner. The pressure is mounting to convert traditional dwellings for tourist use, and the lure of high yield renting potential increasingly leads to indigenous people becoming landlords and moving out of their own dwellings. Coupled with the intensity of out-
migration of working adults, the WHS and its communities are heading towards a precarious future where sustainability could be compromised.

This study of tourism gentrification in an indigenous community setting has demonstrated that when long-term residents are proactive and feel empowered to appropriate tourism development, this can also contribute to social equity, sustainability of the community and its natural and rice-terrace ecosystem. Some long-term indigenous residents have responded to forms and possibilities of outsider- and state-led large-scale gentrification by discerning for themselves ways to improve their own socio-economic standings in accordance with their own aspirations. Often these desires also included wishes to ensure the continuation of one’s own culture and the sustainability of the rice terraces.

Retaining indigenous persons in the WHS could be helped through increased support for individuals to innovate and practise entrepreneurship in the community through the process of self-gentrification. As Cheshire (2009) suggests, efforts to improve social equity would be more effective if directed towards long-term residents themselves, rather than displacing them and moving around neighbourhoods. This predominantly collective and community-centred approach to economic development would encourage economic self-sufficiency, control of activities on traditional lands, improvement of socio-economic circumstances, and strengthening of traditional culture, values and languages (Anderson, 1999; Peredo & McLean, 2010).

Nonetheless, the increasing numbers of tourists and outside-gentrifiers will likely create more future learning opportunities for indigenous entrepreneurs similar to those presented in this article. We also notice that Shibo-Yuanyang promotes ideas and understanding of tourism within the indigenous community. However, active transfer of knowledge and entrepreneurial skills are still lacking. This article recommends that the government and big corporations should proactively facilitate this process of learning with more concerted efforts. Such assertions are well recognised in the literature (e.g. Jeremy et al, 2005).

In summary, this article has demonstrated the novel approach of applying the concept of gentrification to analyse the sustainability of indigenous tourism development in a WHS setting. Taking a gentrification perspective, sustainability of an indigenous
tourism area has been viewed in connection with migration, its drivers and impacts. Large-scale state-led and unorganised outside-gentrifier-led gentrifications are deemed to be unsustainable for the development and tourism at this WHS site.

Instead, the term of “self-gentrification” has been proposed to encapsulate the proactive responses of long-term residents to improve their socio-economic standing in a gentrifying neighbourhood through participation in the tourism sector, which would enhance sustainability. Provisions of learning is a key success factor of self-gentrification, where knowledge is to be exchanged between indigenous and outside agents such as corporations, entrepreneurs, governments, and tourists themselves, and needs to be promoted proactively.

References:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of gentrification</th>
<th>Gentrifiers</th>
<th>Nature</th>
<th>Impacts</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gentrifier-led gentrification</td>
<td>Incoming middleclass gentries</td>
<td>Spontaneous and unorganised</td>
<td>- Rising living costs, rental and property prices.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Results in slower displacement of long-term residents.</td>
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<td>- Newcomers might positively contribute to community and organise resistance to further gentrification.</td>
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<tr>
<td>State-led gentrification</td>
<td>Government / commercial organisations</td>
<td>Large scale, very organised</td>
<td>- Rising living costs, rental and property prices.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>- Intentional social engineering of a locality.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Results in large-scale displacement of long-term residents.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-gentrification</td>
<td>Long-term residents themselves</td>
<td>Slow, requires external support</td>
<td>- Improved socio-economic status of local population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Reduced out-migration compared to other types of gentrification, thereby keeping community intact and retaining local unique culture.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>- Enhanced collaboration between locals and newcomers.</td>
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# Online Supplementary File: Participant demographic and key areas of inquiry

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<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
<th>Key interview questions / areas of inquiry</th>
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| Small guesthouse / restaurant owner                                        | 13 (of which 5 indigenous persons) | • Owner background – education, ethnicity, place of origin, length of living in the site  
• Business/property: types of ownership, rental contract, landlord, investment  
• Motivations to come to the site and/or to start their business  
• Learning and barriers in founding/growing business (regulation, investment and skills)  
• Relationship with and views on local indigenous, and local cultural changes and preservation |
| Managers of large tourism corporation / local government officer (rice terrace management connected departments) | 16 (of which 5 C-level; 2 mid-level managers, 5 county government directors, 4 high-level officers) | • Views and plans on developing tourism industry  
• Views on local indigenous involvement, and local culture changes and preservation.  
• Views on key issues and impacts of tourism development |
| Village officers / other local community-leaders                           | 9 (of which 5 village level officers, 1 headmaster, 2 teachers, 1 local historian) | • Views and plans on developing tourism industry  
• Views on key issues and impacts of tourism development  
• Views on local involvement in tourism development |
| Entry-level tourism industry workers                                       | 12                     | • Motivations to work in tourism industry  
• Views on key issues and impacts of tourism development  
• Key learning or life transformation following involvement in tourism industry |
| Other local residents                                                     | 16 (of which 2 university graduates, 3 shop owners, 11 farmers) | • Views on tourism development and its impacts, in-migration and out-migration  
• Views on benefits and impacts of tourism development  
• Involvement in tourism development |